

SUMMER 2014
VOLUME 24 ISSUE 3

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AMBS window

BEING COURAGEOUS

Sara Wenger Shenk, President

Maya Angelou died last month. Tributes to her filled the news. Folks remembered her as “an unstoppable force for art, justice and love” and that often she “drew on her faith as a source of strength to find beauty and perseverance in hard times.”

Maya’s voice lit up my spirit as I participated in closing events of this year, including the graduation of 35 remarkable students.

Maya said: “I believed that there was a God because I was told it by my grandmother and later by other adults. But when I found that I knew not only that there was God but that I was a child of God, when I understood that, when I comprehended that, more than that, when I internalized that, ingested that, I became courageous.”

AMBS’s teachers daily find ways for students to more fully comprehend, internalize, even ingest the “ah ha” that yes, we are children of God.

Diminished participation in church life, polarizing conflict on many fronts and widespread poverty and injustice

require unusual courage by those who offer themselves as leaders for God’s reconciling mission in the world.

Graduating seniors spoke of their gratitude. One said: *The AMBS community impacts moral formation and character formation. They are inseparable. The longer I’ve stayed at AMBS, the more I’ve become completely convinced of that, because I see the community here and I see how my classmates have evolved. I see how I have evolved.... I know right now there’s a ton of uncertainty within Mennonite Church USA ... which saddens me deeply. I pray fervently that regardless of what happens there will still be a way for people from all over to be a part of this beautiful community of believers.*



Another said: *My time here was a great experience. I think of the first day*

when the dean said, “I want you freshmen to know you are going to hear things that are different than what you’re used to hearing.” I was like “Really?” I wondered, “Do I actually belong here?” Then some of my reading started turning in me. I felt like I was ready to preach as soon as I got out of class. So I want to say to every single professor here that made me feel welcome, “I love you from the bottom of my heart. God bless you.”

With Maya may we together understand, comprehend, internalize and even ingest that we are children of God. That’s what it will take to become courageous for persevering in hard times. ●

Photo above: Commencement speaker James Logan, PhD, urged graduates to go forward wrapped in Christian love “with a wise mixture of toughness, gentleness, joy, courage, prudence, temperance, humility, mercy, and a very, very difficult peaceableness.” Read more about commencement on page 7. Credit: Nekeisha Alexis-Baker

Thirty-five graduates honored

Thirty-five graduates were honored at the AMBS commencement service on May 24, 2014. They received the following degrees:

MDiv Master of Divinity

MAPS Master of Arts: Peace Studies

MATS Master of Arts: Theological Studies

Certificates are noted with the information for individual graduates.

Graduates not able to be present for commencement are listed on page 6.

John Bender. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference historian and retired writer-editor. He and Marty, his wife, are members of Prairie Street Mennonite Church.

Wilma Cender. *MACF; concentration in Christian spirituality.* Will expand her spiritual direction practice and provide pastoral care and counseling. Wilma

and Karl, her husband, are members of Valparaiso (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

Sara Erb. *MDiv; concentration in theological studies.* Will begin an interim pastoral position in Ontario. Sara is a member of Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, and attends Belmont Neighborhood Fellowship, Elkhart.

Lawrence Giden. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Will continue in the ministries he is doing at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Niles, Mich.

Julia Gingrich. *MDiv; concentration in pastoral ministry.* Will continue work with the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program at the Center for Community Justice in Elkhart and explore a pastoral ministry assignment. Julia and Josh Weaver, her husband, are members of Prairie Street Mennonite Church.

Adam Graber Roth. *MAPS.* Will serve for three years with Karen, his wife, in a Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Egypt. They will live in Beni Suef, teaching English as a Foreign Language and Peacebuilding.

Dianna Graham. *MDiv; concentration in theological studies.* Hopes to start a non-profit center called "Shalom Center." She is married to Willie J. Graham Sr. and is a member of New Light of Hope Christian Center Church of God in Christ in Elkhart.

Todd Gusler. *MDiv; concentration in Christian faith formation.* Pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. Todd and Leah, his wife, have one child and attend Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Chaiya Hadtasunsern. *MDiv in dual degree program with Andrews University's Master of Social Work.* Will be pastor of Hmong Mennonite Church,



John Bender, Wilma Cender, Sara Erb, Lawrence Giden, Julia Gingrich.

Denver, Colo. He and Aranya, his wife, have four children and attend Hively Avenue Mennonite Church.

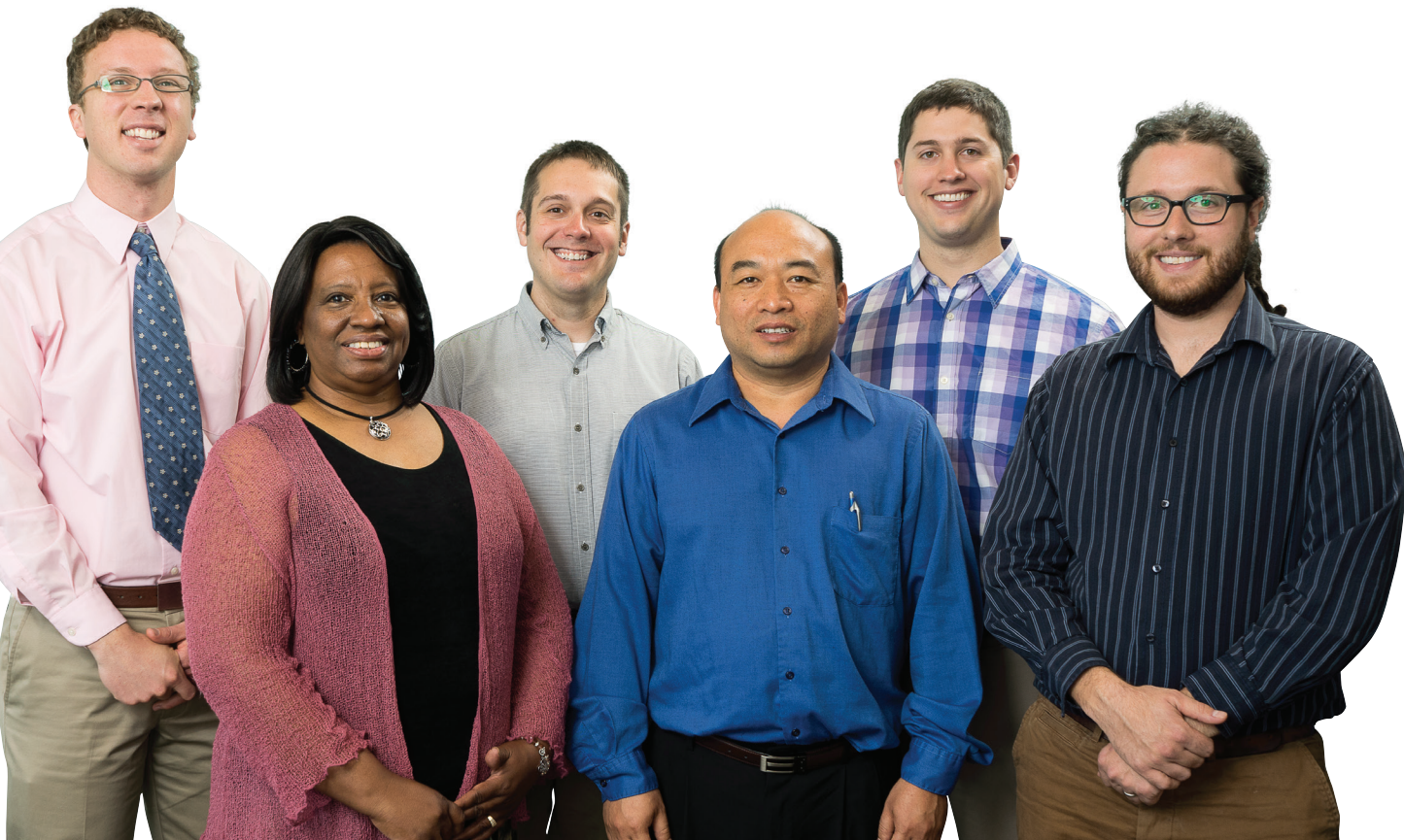
Jeffrey Hochstetler. *MDiv; concentration in pastoral ministry.* Pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. He is married to Kelsey Hochstetler. He is a member of Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, and is an associate member of East Goshen Mennonite Church.

Kyle Metzger. *MAPS.* Will be ministry coordinator at Love in the Name of Christ in Huntington, Ind. He and Sharon Metzger, his wife, are members of 509 Community in Huntington.

Elizabeth Miller. *MATS; concentration in theology and ethics.* Exploring further study in religious history. She is married to Neil Richer and is a member of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church.



At the Dean's Breakfast, graduate Eric Vandrick received the Marlin E. Miller award for excellence in theological studies from Lois Barrett, professor of theology and Anabaptist studies. Additional awards are announced on page 6.



Adam Graber Roth, Dianna Graham, Todd Gusler, Chaiya Hadtasunern, Jeff Hochstetler, Kyle Metzger.

2014 GRADUATES

Lyle Miller. *MDiv.* Will continue as Pastor of Family Life and Financial Stewardship at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen. Lyle is married to Bonnie Miller.

Martin Navarro. *MDiv; concentration in theological studies.* Will begin an assignment with Mennonite Education Agency in Elkhart, providing program and administrative support and arranging and coordinating events. Martin is married to Viridiana Lopez-Soto and is a member of Comunidad Cristiana Vida Abundante, Cicero, Ill.

Lydia Nofziger. *MDiv; concentration in theological studies.* Will complete a pastoral assignment for a pastor on sabbatical this summer and then pursue a position in social service or teaching ministry in Columbus, Ohio.

Theophilus Odhiambo. *MDiv; concentration in Christian spiritual formation.* Pursuing a pastoral ministry or other service assignment. He and Agnes, his wife, have four children and are members of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Linda Short. *MDiv; concentration in pastoral care and counseling.* Pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. She is married to LaVon Short and attends Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Katrina Mullet Siegrist. *MDiv; concentration in pastoral care and counseling.* Will do a Clinical Pastoral Education Residency at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Mishawaka. She is married to Brent Siegrist and attends Walnut Hill Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Kevin Swartzendruber. *MDiv; concentration in pastoral ministry.*

Pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. He is married to Angela Swartzendruber and is a member of North Goshen Mennonite Church.

Naomi Tice. *MACF; concentration in worship.* Pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. She is a member of Springs Mennonite Church, Springs, Pa.

Eric Vandrick. *MATS; concentration in theology and ethics.* Will become manager of Mennonite Cooperative Bookstore at AMBS. Eric and Linsey, his wife, are members of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church.

Anita Yoder. *Certificate in Worship Leadership.* Will continue as Pastor of Worship and Music at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. She is married to Randi Yoder. ●



Elizabeth Miller, Lyle Miller, Martin Navarro, Lydia Nofziger, Theo Odhiambo, Linda Short.

Chaiya Haddasunsern completed two degrees this year, to add to the AMBS degree he already had. He completed the AMBS Master of Divinity degree and a Master of Social Work degree from Andrews University in a dual-degree program. In 2002, Chaiya received a Master of Arts in Mission and Evangelism and he was pastor of Hickory Hmong Mennonite Church in Hickory, N.C., before returning to AMBS.

After a trip to Thailand this summer to visit family and friends, Chaiya and Aranya, his wife, and their four sons will move to Denver, Colo., where Chaiya will become a part-time pastor of the Hmong Mennonite Church there.



Trina Siegrist, Kevin Swartzendruber, Naomi Tice, Eric Vandrick, Anita Yoder.

2014 GRADUATES

These graduates were not able to participate in the commencement festivities.

Hildegard Amstutz. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Business chaplain and program director for spiritual retreats in Asociación Querit, Asunción, Paraguay. Hildi and C. Paul Amstutz are members of Mennonitengemeinde Concordia in Asunción.

Leonard Beechy. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* English teacher at Northridge High School, Middlebury, Ind., and writer for Mennonite Publishing Network. He and Sharon, his wife, are members of Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Mary Brubaker-Zehr. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Director of student services for Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo (Ont.). Mary and Scott, her husband, are members of Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Caitlin Desjardins. *MDiv with a concentration in theological studies.* Youth director at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Ohio.

Gail Graber. *AMBS–Great Plains Foundation Program of Study.* Chaplain at Bethesda Home in Goessel, Kan. She is a member of Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Jason Greig. *MDiv; concentration in theological studies.* Pursuing doctoral studies. Jason and Elisabeth Brendebach Greig, his wife, and their two sons are living in Wissen, Germany.

John Hershberger. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Behavioral clinician at Elkhart General Hospital in the Innovative Health Options program. He and Diana, his wife, are members of College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Mary Yoder Holsopple. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Bullying Prevention Coordinator for Elkhart Community Schools. Mary and Elroy, her husband, are members of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Benjamin Charles (Chuck) Hostetter. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Pastor of Mountain View Mennonite Church, Hickory, N.C., and district overseer for congregations in Tennessee, Carolina and Kentucky for Virginia Mennonite Conference. He is married to Joyce Moyer Hostetter.

Bernice Kaufman. *Certificate in Theological Studies.* Executive assistant for Mennonite Women USA. Berni is a member of Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Henry Klassen. *Certificate in Christian Ministry, Winnipeg Centre for Ministry Studies,* a cooperative program of AMBS and Canadian Mennonite University. Will continue lay ministry in his congregation, First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. He is married to Anne-Marie Klassen.

Joon Hyoung Park. *MDiv; concentration in theological studies.* Pursuing a mission assignment with Mennonite Church Canada Witness. Joon and Shim Beack, his wife, are members of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

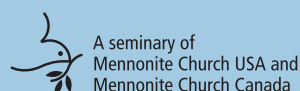
Ki Seok (Peter) Sung. *MAPS.* Pursuing pastoral ministry. Peter and Hae Chin Woo, his wife, live in Kwanwondo, South Korea. ●

AMBS Window SUMMER 2014 Volume 24 Issue 3

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GRADUATE AWARDS

AMBS faculty selects graduates to receive awards each year. These are presented at the Dean's Breakfast the day before commencement. The graduates receive a gift certificate to the Mennonite Cooperative Bookstore, a subscription to *Mennonite Quarterly Review* or another journal, or a gift registration for an upcoming AMBS workshop or webinar.

This year's recipients are:

Joon Hyoung Park. Award of excellence in missional leadership
Julia Gingrich. Award of excellence in preaching
Trina Siegrist. Award of excellence in pastoral care and counseling

Todd Gusler. Award of excellence in Christian formation

Elizabeth Miller. C.J. Dyck award for excellence in history

Jason Greig. Marlin E. Miller award for theological studies

Eric Vandrick. Marlin E. Miller award for theological studies

Caitlin Desjardins. Gertrude Roten award for excellence in Greek exegesis

Lydia Nofziger. Millard Lind award for excellence in biblical interpretation

Naomi Tice. Heart of the Community award ●

Message, scripture and charge call grads to love

Graduates were reminded of “the simple yet not so simple four-letter word: Love” by speaker James Logan, PhD, at the commencement service on May 24, at College Mennonite Church.

In his address, “A Christian politics of (sometimes funky) love,” Logan, an AMBS graduate who teaches at Earlham College, Richmond, Ind., named ways in which the world needs the contributions of the graduates. He pointed to violence and conflict; children dying because of malnutrition, lack of water and substandard medical care; Black and Latino men incarcerated because of racial injustice; and how consumerism and “me-ism” seem to be the highest measure of being human.

Logan affirmed the ways graduates are already deeply engaged through ministries related to poverty, hunger, racism and unjust incarceration, peace and justice, care for the environment, and care for those considered to be people with disabilities. While he acknowledged that graduates are aware that “the struggle is real,” he challenged them to continue and expand their involvement in the tough issues present in the world.

“It is especially important to remember that the pursuit of love will sometimes be ‘funky,’” he emphasized. “When you involve yourself deeply in the politics of Christian love in this world you will find that there is sometimes going to be a physical and moral stench that accompanies your human associations.”

The supreme example of bringing love into a world yearning for it, Logan said,



In responding to the charge they received from Professor Ted Koontz, graduates turned to the congregation to sing “They will know we are Christians by our love.” They invited the congregation to join them on the third verse.

is Jesus: “aching and suffering love for the very humanity that nailed him to and then hung him from a cross.”

Real Christian love must not be an escape, he added; “real Christian love is an entry into the needs of the present, sharing in its suffering, its needs and activities and its hope.”

I Corinthians 13 provided the Scripture text for the service, and it was read in four languages represented among the graduates. Martin Navarro read in Spanish, Chaiya Hadtasunsern in Thai, Theo Odhiambo in Swahili and

Lydia Nofziger in English.

In his charge to the graduates, Professor of Ethics and Peace Studies Ted Koontz encouraged the class “to know yourself loved by God, to know others as loved by God, and to practice loving as God loves.” Then he added, “That should keep you busy for a while.” ●

YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

Every staff and faculty role at AMBS is essential, but one that attends to the heart of our worship and life is the campus pastor. Janeen Bertsche Johnson oversees chapel services, prayer gatherings, weekly forums with speakers and discussion, and community activities such as potluck meals. She also serves as instructor for several colloquia and coordinates LEAP (Leadership Education in Anabaptist Perspective), the first course students take in the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Christian Formation degrees.

Your gifts make it possible for her to provide this leadership along with mentoring and pastoral counseling that are part of being a pastor to the seminary community. Thank you for gifts that support these dimensions of care for students and employees, that enrich our worship and that add dimensions of fun to our life together. ●



PANORAMA



Family members and the AMBS community surrounded Ted Koontz and Gayle Gerber Koontz to bless them at a June 5 event honoring them for 31 years of teaching at AMBS. On Ted's right is Peter Koontz, son; On Gayle's left are Tim and Sarah Koontz, son and daughter-in-law.

Retirements

Ted Koontz, professor of ethics and peace studies, and Gayle Gerber Koontz, professor of theology and ethics, are retiring this summer after teaching at AMBS for 31 years.

At a June 5 event, Sara Wenger Shenk, president, called Gayle "pioneer, priest, poet, passionate lover of God, beloved sister in Christ." Ted she described as "intrepid pilgrim, tenacious peacemaker, patient listener, humble servant, persistent prophet."

Short Courses for everyone

Anabaptist Short Courses—six-week, non-credit, online courses—begin a new series in fall:

- Exploring Anabaptist History and Theology, led by Jamie Pitts, PhD, Oct. 22–Dec. 3

www.ambs.edu/anabaptistshortcourses

Pastors Week 2015

"Where culture blurs theology: What is an Anabaptist Christian" is the theme that four presenters will address:

- Greg Boyd, PhD
- Drew Hart, MDiv, PhD student
- Janet Plenert, MDiv
- Elizabeth Soto Albrecht, DMin

Visit www.ambs.edu/pastorsweek for details of the January 26–29 event.

Rooted and Grounded

Learn who's speaking at the September 18–20 conference on land and Christian discipleship and register at

www.ambs.edu/rootedandgrounded

ALUMNI RECOGNITION 2014

Wilma Ann Bailey (Master of Divinity 1979) is a scholar who gives her gifts to the church, and for this AMBS honors her this year with the annual AMBS Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition.

Wilma followed her degree at AMBS with MA and PhD degrees from Vanderbilt University, and for 14 years she has taught Hebrew Bible at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.

She also taught at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., and directed the James Lark Leadership Program and taught at Goshen College. She was licensed for ministry in 1980 by Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, becoming the first woman to be licensed by the conference. She has served on boards of the Mennonite Church, Mennonite Central Committee, Philhaven (a mental and behavioral health care provider) and Eastern Mennonite University.

Wilma is a writer of both scholarly materials and Bible studies for the church. She wrote the Lamentations

volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series to be released this fall, and earlier wrote *You shall not kill or You shall not murder: The assault on a biblical text* (Liturgical Press, 2005), in addition to many other books. She has published seven volumes of Adult Bible Study Guides published by Faith and Life Press and has another forthcoming, in addition to articles, essays and book reviews on topics related to peace and justice, women in ancient Israel, laments and the environment.

She has taught in other world contexts, including Chunnakam, Sri Lanka; Bulawayo, Zimbabwe; and at the Imam Khomeini Educational and Research Institute in Qom, Iran.

At AMBS, we look forward to Wilma joining the September 18–20 conference Rooted and Grounded: A conference on land and Christian discipleship. She also will be on campus to be honored for the Ministry and Service Recognition sometime in October. ●





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